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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. 50X1-HUM

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

50X1-HUM

40th Artillery Division, stationed south of Riga and based between Cesis and Paltmale at the opening of the maneuvers;

257th Artillery Regiment, stationed in the Gaujas Poligons.

5. Some of the participating units were stationed in the Soviet Zone of Germany during 1947 and 1948.
6. The following critique of the maneuvers was obtained from members of the headquarters of the 257th Infantry Division:
 - a. The troops attacking across the Gulf of Riga showed a lack of aggressive spirit. Coordination of operations among the several units was also faulty.
 - b. Severely criticized were the numerous accidents which occurred when the armored units were thrown across the Gauja River.
 - c. Warmly commended were the discipline and spirit shown by the defenders of Saaremaa island. Also praiseworthy was the smooth functioning of the communications system throughout the maneuvers.
 - d. The participating Soviet Air Force units, which had recently been transferred to Latvia from the Minusinsk (53-43N, 91-40E), Siberia, region, demonstrated a fine aggressive spirit.

Second Maneuvers: August 1950

7. The August 1950 maneuvers in the Riga area were carried out under a particularly close security screen. Civilians were rigorously excluded from the zones of operations. These measures led observers to believe that some of the units taking part were manned by possibly unreliable Latvian elements drafted into the Soviet Army since 1948. The maneuvers lasted from 2 to 28 August.
8. The object of the maneuvers involved an attack on the sector of the Courland Peninsula between Roja (57-31N, 22-50E) and Meersrags (57-22N, 23-08E) by troops based on Tukums (56-55N, 23-10E), west of Riga, and the Gaujas Poligons, east of Riga. Large numbers of airborne troops took part in the operations.
9. The airborne practice featured the testing of a new parachute release belt which was calculated to detach the parachute immediately upon the landing of the soldier. The apparatus proved to be unreliable and caused numerous casualties. Some 60 paratroopers were drowned in the Engures Lake (57-15N, 23-09E) alone during the operation. The 316th Infantry Regiment was particularly hard hit by accidents.

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